

**Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting  
December 30, 2022**

**CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Chairman Mike Baughn called the REGULAR Commissioners Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at the Thomas County Historical Courthouse on Friday, December 30, 2022; followed by the flag salute (Pledge of Allegiance) with Commissioner Brad Flipse, Commissioner Brian Luedke, County Attorney Chris Rohr, County Clerk Keesa Mariman, Emergency Management Director David Becker, Landfill Supervisor Travis Williby, Economic Development Director Jordan Stephenson, Maintenance Director Josh Faber, Road and Bridge Supervisor Clair Schrock, Court Administrator JoEllyn Argabright, and Colby Free Press Reporter Sloane Enninga.

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** No announcements.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:** No comments.

**AGENDA ADDITIONS/REVISIONS:** Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to approve the agenda with the amendment of adding County Attorney-Case and Staff Reports, Employee Policy Handbook Change, KDHE Approval of 5-year Landfill Plan and to remove domain clean up; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**COURT ADMINISTRATOR:** JoEllyn Argabright apologized to the Commission for not being at the previous meeting where questions were asked regarding an email she sent. She did realize it had become an issue until she was contacted by the Colby Free Press for an interview. Argabright explained her stance on the previous purchase, and stated she does recognize the concern but thought she was doing the right thing by saving money overall. She stated she understands and her email was not in any way to be condescending towards the Commission. She welcomed Commission to speak to them anytime. Commissioners stated they appreciated the clarification on this.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**2022-17-AMBULANCE FUNDS:** Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-17 on all remaining Ambulance Funds be transferred to the Ambulance Capital Outlay Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-18-HEALTH:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-18 on all remaining County Health Funds be transferred to the Special Equipment Reserved Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carries unanimously.

**2022-19-EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:** Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-19 on all remaining Emergency Management Funds be transferred to the Emergency Management Special Equipment Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-20-ELECTION FUNDS:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-20 on all remaining County Election Funds be transferred to the Special Equipment Reserve Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-21-REG OF DEEDS:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-21 on all remaining Register of Deeds Funds be transferred to the Register of Deeds Capital Outlay Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-22-RFD#3:** Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-22 on all remaining Rural Fire District #3 General Funds be transferred to the Rural Fire District #3 Capital Outlay Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-23-ROAD & BRIDGE:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-23 on half the of the remaining County Road & Bridge Funds will be transferred to the County Special Highway Improvement Fund on December 31, 2022; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-24-LANDFILL:** Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-24 on all remaining Sanitary Landfill Funds be transferred to the Sanitary Landfill Capital Outlay Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-25-TRANSPORTATION:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-25 on all remaining County General Public Transportation Funds on hand be transferred to the Special Equipment Reserve Fund; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-26-NOXIOUS WEED:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-26 on the remaining Noxious Weed Department Funds to be transferred to the Noxious Weed Department Capital Outlay Fund on December 31, 2022; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-27-ROAD & BRIDGE:** Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-27 on half the of the remaining County Road & Bridge Funds will be transferred to the County Special Equipment Fund on December 31, 2022; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**2022-28-ROAD & BRIDGE:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to adopt resolution 2022-28 on the remaining East Hale Township Funds to be transferred to the Thomas County Road and Bridge Fund on December 31,2022; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**ELECTED OFFICIAL 2023 SALARIES:** Chairman Mike Baughn recommended to go with the matrix for Elected Official Salaries for 2023. Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to expand the Matrix adding an additional two levels with one at \$75,000 to 2% max increase and \$100,000 to 1.5%; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse. Commissioner Brian Luedke stated that he would like to have a discussion with salary adjustments about what's happening in the world, with no further discussion he motion carried unanimously. Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to have Elected Officials' Salaries follow the Matrix; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried 2-1 with Commissioner Brad Flipse voting NAY.

**INVENTORY:** Commission received inventory from the following departments: Transportation Van, County Election, IT, Recycling, Landfill, Clerk, Commissioners, Emergency Management, County Treasurer, Register of Deeds, Noxious Weed, Road & Bridge, County Attorney, EMS, and the Health Department. Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to accept the current inventory; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke. A discussion continued regarding IT inventory. Emergency Management Director David Becker explained that we are still missing some items in the amount of \$5,749.05. Director Becker asked commission what they would like to do with this. County Attorney Chris Rohr asked if these items are new or old. Director Becker stated some date back to 2016. Chairman Mike Baughn stated that they could refer this to the Sheriff's office to open an investigation of missing items to see if this is a clerical error. County Attorney Chris Rohr will be in contact with Sheriff Tom Nickols, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Mike Baughn stated the Commission could do a true audit of each department in their spare time to make sure inventory is documented accurately.

**TAX ROLL CORRECTIONS:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve the following Tax Roll Corrections:

- 2022 Trucks Addition to Vicnor Farms with a net change in tax dollars of \$601.62
- 2022 Trucks Addition to Vicnor Farms with a net change in tax dollars of \$722.86
- 2022 Personal Property abatement for Bradley & Marie Skolout with a net change in tax dollars of \$-18,559.64
- 2022 Personal Property abatement for Brent Beckman with a net change in tax dollars of \$-773.28

The motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVE DEC 19 MINUTES:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve the Commission Minutes for December 19 as presented; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVE DEC PAYROLL:** Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve December Payroll in the amount of \$400,091.42; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.

**APPROVE AP: Commissioner Brian Luedke made a motion to approve the Accounts Payable Payment Registers as follows: Courthouse General \$342,970.06, Noxious Weed in the amount of \$4,549.72, and Road & Bridge in the amount of \$18,434.50 (as reviewed by both County Attorney Chris Rohr and Commissioner Brian Luedke); the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.**

**COUNTY ATTORNEY UPDATE:** County Attorney Chris Rohr gave an update on all his office has been able to accomplish in 2022 with numbers of cases etc. Cases written by Highway Patrol and Sheriff amounted to \$1,572 in citations. There were 27 juvenile cases in 2021, and 54 filed in 2022, and the County Attorney's offices is working to get resources for children. They continue to work with Juvenile Services to help offenders. The hope is that they are still formable while they're still young. Cases of care and treatment-Mental health- came in at 18 cases for 2022 and were 16 in 2021. There were 212 Criminal cases in 2022, and 222 in 2021. County Attorney Chris Rohr stated he is hoping to get these people treatment and help them to avoid going to jail or prison. The County Attorney's offices was able to complete the tax sale in 2022 and have begun one for 2023 already. The diversion program has made several donations which include to the Colby High School Vo Ag Building project, After School Program, the NWKS Hope Foundation and various other community organizations. They helped the Sheriff's office to get the DigiTicket stuff going. This year, the police now have body cams and this protects our officers. They purchased boots for the Highway Patrol, and are in discussion with law enforcement for other needs. They are also working with Interpol which will allow reports to get directly to the county attorney and lessen the load on the sheriff's department. They have continued attending the Commission meetings to help be available for all departments.

County Attorney Chris Rohr presented a salary request for Katey Fields as she has taken on a lot of responsibility on, brings 5-years experience and a wealth of knowledge. His request is to give her a raise to \$52,000 per year and work as a salaried position rather than hourly. Attorney Rohr explained that Geoffrey Rohr shows the same qualities and like to request that Geoffrey Rohr receives the 4% increase per the matrix for 2023 from \$18.50 to \$19.24. Commissioner Brian Luedke asked how many hours of overtime Katey Fields works on average. Chris stated 10-15 hours of overtime a week. Commissioner Brad Flipse stated that he appreciated what the county attorney's office is doing, and that he is not opposed to those salary adjustments. After much discussion, Commission decided to table this decision for when all department heads can make their recommended wages ready for the 2023 opening meeting.

**KDHE SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN-** A Letter was received from KDHE approving Thomas County's 5-year Solid Waste Management Plan.

**HANDBOOK ADDITION:** Chairman Mike Baughn moved to remove TikTok from all County devices except the County Attorney and Sheriff's office to be used solely for the purpose of investigations; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brad Flipse, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously. Chairman Mike Baughn made a motion to make it a policy that County owned Equipment are prohibited from TikTok; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion he motion carried unanimously.

**MISC:** Commission received the Economic Development Minutes.

**ADJOURNMENT:** *With no further business Commissioner Brad Flipse made a motion to adjourn at 10:24 a.m.; the motion was seconded by Commissioner Brian Luedke, with no further discussion the motion carried unanimously.*

**ATTEST:**

  
Keesa Mariman, County Clerk

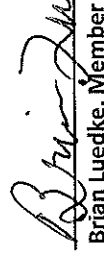


Dated: 1/31/2023

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, THOMAS COUNTY**

  
Mike Baughn, Chairman

  
Brad Flipse, Member

  
Brian Luedke, Member